



THE SOURCE



NEWSLETTER OF THE NHDES DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM
ON THE WEB AT WWW.DES.STATE.NH.US/DWSPP

SUMMER 2002

Source Water Assessment Maps On The Web

DES's Source Water Assessment reports have been available on-line since last year. We are pleased to announce that the maps that accompany the reports can now also be viewed on the web using DES's newly available OneStop GIS Application.

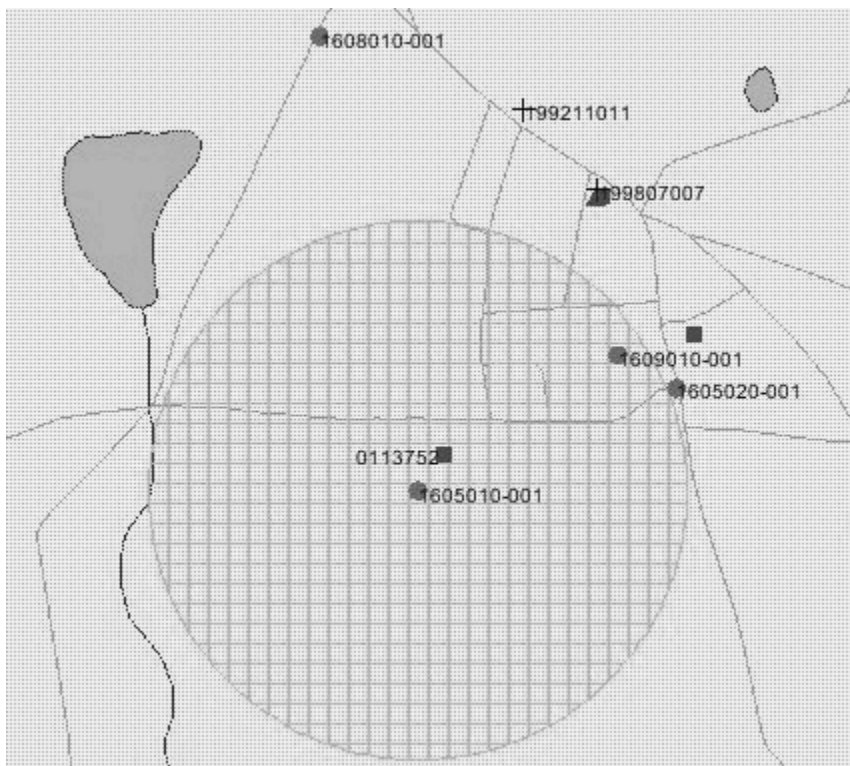
Assessment maps show all types of land uses, including known and potential contamination sources, roads, wells, waterbodies, water and sewer distribution lines, and pesticide application areas within the water systems's source water protection area. The different types of land uses are used to help complete the assessments and

determine a source's susceptibility to contamination. Please note that not all of the land use information used in the assessment maps is available on the web yet.

Several steps need to be taken in order to view an assessment map. Information on creating and viewing an assessment map can be found at www.des.state.nh.us/dwspp/part3.htm. At this web address you will find printable directions on how to view a map and a link to the OneStop GIS Application, which lets you create the map.

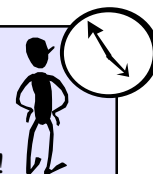
If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Johnna McKenna at 271-7017.

DES's OneStop GIS Application provides access, via the World Wide Web, to GIS data developed by the agency and other state and federal government agencies under the auspices of NH GRANIT (the New Hampshire Geographically Referenced Analysis and Information Transfer System).



An example of the Source Water Assessment map generated for a public water supply well using DES's new OneStop GIS Application.

DON'T FORGET, IT'S TIME
to apply for the
Water Supply Land Grant Program!



Municipal and non-profit water suppliers are invited to apply for grant funding to purchase land or conservation easements within source water protection areas. A 75 percent local match is required.

The Fall 2002 Project Eligibility Applications are due on October 1, 2002. For more information or to discuss a potential project, contact Sherry Godlewski at 271-0688 or visit our website at www.des.state.nh.us/dwspp/acqui.htm



Spotlight on...Contoocook Village Precinct

Question: *If a source protection area is completely wooded, with no businesses, homes, or roads, what is there to protect against?*

Answer: *Recreational use, timber harvesting, and potential future development are all potential threats to the purity of your source. And security is a concern for all systems. Systems in this situation are fortunate; for them, source protection is all about prevention. And prevention is cheap. Don't be content to "leave well enough alone." Bear Pond is an example of what can be done.*

Contoocook Village Precinct has obtained its water supply from Bear Pond since the late 1800s. Today, the water system serves 500 connections supplying 1,500 residents. While the Village of Contoocook is located in Hopkinton, Bear Pond is just over the town line in Warner. The Bear Pond watershed, less than one square mile, is all wooded. The Precinct owns the land immediately surrounding the pond, and the water is of high quality. However, the Precinct saw its substantial investment in a filtration plant and water main as worth protecting.

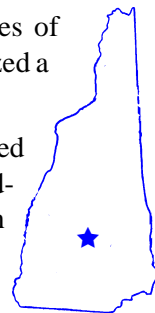
Recognizing that the majority of the watershed is privately owned, and concerned about access routes to the pond, areas eroded by large off-road vehicles, and recent logging operations, the Precinct obtained a Source Water Protection Grant from DES to develop a watershed protection plan. The Precinct's consultant, Provan & Lorber, researched property boundaries and local zoning in the three-town watershed, characterized the watershed in terms of soils and veg-

etation, assessed potential sources of contamination, and in 2001 finalized a protection plan

Action items in the plan included acquisition of key parcels, amending DES's watershed protection rule for Bear Pond, proposing a zoning overlay district, restricting access to the intake, posting signs around the pond, expanding monitoring of land use and water quality, and outreach to land use boards and recreation groups that use the watershed.

In the year since the completion of the plan, the Precinct has purchased a 138-acre tract of land in the watershed, worked with the Warner Conservation Commission to obtain an easement over another 250 acres, posted signs listing permitted and prohibited uses near the pond, and closed off truck access to the watershed. The Precinct's land is still open to snowmobiles, trail bikes, ATVs, and lower-impact activities. Next on the Precinct's agenda are eliminating public access to the area near the intake and relocating a snowmobile trail away from the pond.

Commissioner Dick Strickford attributes the program's success to a supportive Board of Commissioners and citizens of the Precinct, along with close cooperation with the Warner Conservation Commission.



NH Source Protection Efforts Recognized

Two water suppliers and a municipal committee from New Hampshire are being featured on the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water's website for their outstanding source protection efforts. These entities were selected because each has developed a comprehensive approach to source water protection that reflects a strong commitment to safeguarding the public's health.

The featured groups are the Plaistow Source Water Protection Committee, Manchester Water Works, and Merrimack Village District. A copy of Plaistow's recently completed source protection plan and case studies of Manchester's and Merrimack's protection efforts can be found on EPA's Source Water Features page at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/features.html.

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6 Hazen Drive
P.O. Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
(603) 271-3503

Asst. Commissioner	George Dana Bisbee
Division Director	Harry T. Stewart
Bureau Administrator	Anthony P. Giunta
Program Manager	Sarah Pillsbury
Editors	Nicole Clegg, Paul Susca

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Closer To Home

*Information for well owners and
public water system customers*

Well Water Contamination - It's Often Natural

New Hampshire prides itself on its environment and natural beauty. Each year thousands of tourists flock to our state to enjoy our scenic vistas, pristine lakes, and rural character. Few people think that groundwater contamination occurs here. This misunderstanding is fueled by the fact that headline-grabbing stories of contaminated well water often focus on human actions that result in tainted drinking water. For instance, headlines in local papers have included stories about a Jaffrey well contaminated by cyanide wastes from a factory, Milford town wells closed because of contamination by factory chemicals, and a Merrimack well contaminated by the dumping of TCE in a junk yard.

Because of this tendency to publicize human-caused contamination, many people living in more rural areas may feel they are immune to contamination because they are far from industrial and commercial properties and urban areas. In reality, the majority of drinking water contamination in New Hampshire occurs naturally, as a result of

the state's geology, instead of the result of any human activity or manmade substance. Contaminants such as radon, arsenic, uranium, and bacteria are all the result of our geology.

So what can you do to protect yourself from substances that naturally occur in the ground? You certainly can't change New Hampshire's geological past or move your house. So what can you do? The first step is to test your water on a regular basis so that you know if any of these naturally-occurring contaminants are present at high concentrations. The state laboratory and many private labs are ready to help you. Once you know whether certain naturally-occurring contaminants are present in your drinking water, then you can investigate various treatment options.

To learn more about testing your well water, visit our website at www.des.state.nh.us/well_testing.htm or call 271-3139 to receive our well testing flyer and information about certified laboratories.

DWSPP Welcomes a New Face and Says Good-bye to Another

Welcome to Tim Nowack

The Drinking Water Source Protection Program recently hired Tim Nowack to coordinate approvals of new community large well sites and applications for large groundwater withdrawals, including those relative to bottled water. Tim can be reached at 271-8866 or tnowack@des.state.nh.us.

Tim comes to our program with a background in hydrogeology and geo-information systems, in both the private and public sectors. He has worked for an oil and gas exploration company, a geophysical data processing firm, and several engineering consulting firms, where he conducted both water supply and contaminated groundwater investigations. Tim previously worked for DES as a hydrogeologist in the Groundwater Protection Bureau from 1989 to 1994. During that time, he managed contaminated groundwater remediation projects, assessed technical and regulatory aspects of permit applications, and provided technical support for enforcement.

Farewell to Dave Reid

At the same time, the Drinking Water Source Protection Program has said good-bye to Dave Reid, former coordinator of the Chemical Monitoring Waiver Program. Dave was also responsible for BMP training and emergency planning for water suppliers.

Dave leaves our program to work as a project manager for DES's Oil Remediation and Compliance Bureau (ORCB) where he will coordinate activities between the ORCB and our own Water Supply Engineering Bureau for addressing gasoline ether (including MtBE) contamination of public water supplies.

Any questions concerning the waiver program or emergency plans should now be directed to Johnna McKenna at 271-7017 or jmckenna@des.state.nh.us. Diana Morgan will take over Dave's BMP training duties. Diana can be reached at 271-2947 or dmorgan@des.state.nh.us.

New Water Laws Encourage Regional Water Supply Cooperation and Conservation

On May 13, 2002, the Governor signed two bills into law, Senate Bill 437, which will improve the safety and reliability of the state's water supplies, and SB 440, which will increase water conservation in the state. These two bills implement recommendations contained in a study (found on the web at www.des.state.nh.us/pdf/Report_DES-PUC.pdf) completed by the DES and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

Provisions of the new law enacted by the passage of SB 437 include:

- Clarifying the Governor's authority to declare a water supply emergency and immediately impose additional protection measures during such an emergency.
- Creating a mechanism by which citizens may petition DES to evaluate and, if warranted, require inter-municipal water system connections.
- Allowing a municipal water system to charge rate premiums for inter-municipal retail water service without being subject to the regulations of the PUC. Under this law, rate premiums are capped at 15 percent above the rate charged to municipal customers, or at a higher rate if PUC finds such exemption and authorization to be consistent with the public good.
- Allowing public water suppliers regulated by the PUC to recover costs for regional planning and new source development through customer rates; and
- Establishing a committee to study state aid for regional improvements.

Contact Bob Mann at 271-2953 or rmann@des.state.nh.us for more information regarding this new law.

The new law enacted by the passage of SB 440 requires that DES adopt water efficiency rules that applicants must comply with when developing new withdrawals subject to small and large community well siting regulations, large groundwater withdrawal regulations, and 401 Water Quality Certificate requirements. DES will convene an advisory committee to assist with the development of water conservation rules. It is anticipated that the advisory committee will have its first meeting in September 2002. If you are interested in participating, contact Brandon Kernen at 271-0660 or bkernen@des.state.nh.us.

For the full text of these bills, please refer to www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2002.

Monitoring Well Abandonment: Your Responsibilities

Did you know that property owners have a legal obligation to either properly maintain or abandon monitoring wells? Monitoring wells are typically installed at commercial and industrial properties when they are sold or if contamination is suspected. Monitoring wells are also frequently installed near public water supply wells. An improperly maintained monitoring well can have serious consequences for water quality, because it can serve as a direct conduit for the vertical movement of point and non-point source pollution into the groundwater from the land surface.

DES has prepared a fact sheet that describes how to both maintain and abandon a monitoring well in accordance with state laws and regulations. The fact sheet is available at www.des.state.nh.us/factsheets/ws/ws-22-16.htm or by contacting the DES Public Information Center at 271-2975.

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